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# A-level HISTORY 7042/2P

Component 2P The Transformation of China, 1936-1997

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**Mark scheme**

June 2022

Version: 1.0 Final



2 2 6 A 7 0 4 2 / 2 P / M S

Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

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## Level of response marking instructions

Level of response mark schemes are broken down into levels, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor for the level shows the average performance for the level. There are marks in each level.

Before you apply the mark scheme to a student's answer read through the answer and annotate it (as instructed) to show the qualities that are being looked for. You can then apply the mark scheme.

### Step 1 Determine a level

Start at the lowest level of the mark scheme and use it as a ladder to see whether the answer meets the descriptor for that level. The descriptor for the level indicates the different qualities that might be seen in the student's answer for that level. If it meets the lowest level then go to the next one and decide if it meets this level, and so on, until you have a match between the level descriptor and the answer. With practice and familiarity you will find that for better answers you will be able to quickly skip through the lower levels of the mark scheme.

When assigning a level you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not look to pick holes in small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest. If the answer covers different aspects of different levels of the mark scheme you should use a best fit approach for defining the level and then use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the level, i.e. if the response is predominantly Level 3 with a small amount of Level 4 material it would be placed in Level 3 but be awarded a mark near the top of the level because of the Level 4 content.

### Step 2 Determine a mark

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. The descriptors on how to allocate marks can help with this. The exemplar materials used during standardisation will help. There will be an answer in the standardising materials which will correspond with each level of the mark scheme. This answer will have been awarded a mark by the Lead Examiner. You can compare the student's answer with the example to determine if it is the same standard, better or worse than the example. You can then use this to allocate a mark for the answer based on the Lead Examiner's mark on the example.

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

Indicative content in the mark scheme is provided as a guide for examiners. It is not intended to be exhaustive and you must credit other valid points. Students do not have to cover all of the points mentioned in the Indicative content to reach the highest level of the mark scheme.

An answer which contains nothing of relevance to the question must be awarded no marks.

**Section A**

- 0 1** With reference to these sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying the Tiananmen Square demonstrations of 1989.

**[30 marks]***Target: AO2*

*Analyse and evaluate appropriate source material, primary and/or contemporary to the period, within the historical context.*

**Generic Mark Scheme**

- L5:** Shows a very good understanding of all three sources in relation to both content and provenance and combines this with a strong awareness of the historical context to present a balanced argument on their value for the particular purpose given in the question. The answer will convey a substantiated judgement. The response demonstrates a very good understanding of context. **25-30**
- L4:** Shows a good understanding of all three sources in relation to both content and provenance and combines this with an awareness of the historical context to provide a balanced argument on their value for the particular purpose given in the question. Judgements may, however, be partial or limited in substantiation. The response demonstrates a good understanding of context. **19-24**
- L3:** Shows some understanding of all three sources in relation to both content and provenance together with some awareness of the historical context. There may, however, be some imbalance in the degree of breadth and depth of comment offered on all three sources and the analysis may not be fully convincing. The answer will make some attempt to consider the value of the sources for the particular purpose given in the question. The response demonstrates an understanding of context. **13-18**
- L2:** The answer will be partial. It may, for example, provide some comment on the value of the sources for the particular purpose given in the question but only address one or two of the sources, or focus exclusively on content (or provenance), or it may consider all three sources but fail to address the value of the sources for the particular purpose given in the question. The response demonstrates some understanding of context. **7-12**
- L1:** The answer will offer some comment on the value of at least one source in relation to the purpose given in the question but the response will be limited and may be partially inaccurate. Comments are likely to be unsupported, vague or generalist. The response demonstrates limited understanding of context. **1-6**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

## Indicative content

**Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.**

**Students must deploy knowledge of the historical context to show an understanding of the relationship between the sources and the issues raised in the question, when assessing the significance of provenance, the arguments deployed in the sources and the tone and emphasis of the sources. Descriptive answers which fail to do this should be awarded no more than Level 2 at best. Answers should address both the value and the limitations of the sources for the particular question and purpose given.**

**Source A: in assessing the value of this source, students may refer to the following:**

### Provenance, tone and emphasis

- as one of the most vocal and popular critics of the Chinese government, Fang had been responsible for encouraging students to criticise the system. The interview is therefore a valuable source in showing the demands being made by the protest movement in the late 1980s
- the preceding year, Fang had been instrumental in encouraging a number of student demonstrations and, as a result, he had been expelled from the Communist Party by the time he gave this interview. The Chinese government were therefore highly sensitive to Fang's actions by late 1987
- the purpose of the source is to rally support for radical change in China from the Western world and to put pressure on the Chinese government itself, since publishing restrictions in China mean that they – rather than the Chinese people – were the domestic audience for the interview
- the tone of the source is one of confidence ('it cannot be avoided'), useful in showing the momentum that was building in the late 1980s and which would culminate in the demonstrations at Tiananmen Square.

### Content and argument

- that Fang is an inspiration to Chinese students ('a hero'), who had been at the heart of the growing protests against the Chinese government in the late 1980s and would be the initial engine behind the 1989 protests at Tiananmen Square. Indeed, Fang's tour of Chinese universities in 1986 had mobilised many students, who would then form the initial nucleus of protesters in 1989
- that the Chinese government view Fang and those sharing his views as dangerous subversives ('bad element'). This can be seen in the way that Fang himself was publicly criticised by the government and purged from the CCP itself in 1987. That said, in fact Deng's regime had tried to win the support of China's intellectuals for the 'Four Modernisations', and this had led to a more liberal atmosphere in late 1980s China which had made such criticism possible in the first place
- the focus of the protest movement in the late 1980s was on political change ('we have to educate ourselves for democracy'). Indeed, this was the stated aim of the early protesters at Tiananmen Square in 1989 and was a common demand of China's intellectuals, many of whom believed the 'Four Modernisations' was incomplete without political reform. However, many of those in urban China were more concerned with pressing economic issues such as rampant inflation, which Fang's interview with Terzani omits
- the pressure for change in China was increasing, with the source strongly implying gathering momentum ('what is your next target?'). A strong case could be made that Deng's moderate changes in the upper echelons of the CCP and the presence of more liberal leaders like Hu Yaobang and his successor Zhao Ziyang had raised expectations and contributed to the willingness of protesters to gather in 1989.

**Source B: in assessing the value of this source, students may refer to the following:**

**Provenance, tone and emphasis**

- as one of the official CCP organs, the People's Daily represented the position of the government and was authorised – even if not directly written by – Deng Xiaoping. It is highly valuable as evidence of the government's (eventual) considered response to the increasing protests and demonstrations centred around Tiananmen Square
- published almost two weeks after Hu Yaobang's death, the article appeared some time after the Tiananmen Square demonstrations began, which is valuable in showing the government's initial hesitation and reluctance to act against or condemn the demonstrators
- the purpose of the source is to persuade the Chinese people of the malicious intent of the protesters and to cut off their support at a time by condemning them as spreading 'rumours' and attempting to 'poison people's minds'
- the tone is deeply critical ('oppose this turmoil'), valuable in showing that by late April 1989 the government had committed themselves to the isolation and confrontation of the protesters.

**Content and argument**

- the death of Hu Yaobang had been the catalyst for widespread and spontaneous mourning in Beijing, with even the government having to admit this. In fact, despite seeming to honour Hu in the source, the Party had taken no steps to rehabilitate him even after his death, and the source plays down how divisive a figure he was, implying a broad cross-section of society – rather than radical students – were taking part in the 'mourning' (demonstrations)
- the CCP had taken a lenient attitude towards the demonstrators ('tolerant and restrained') and indeed the protesters may well have expected this, since Deng himself had criticised the use of coercion in suppressing the Tiananmen Square demonstrations of 1976, and the student protests of 1986 were ended with relatively little force. The article was likely to have been received with some surprise, since it marked a significant change in direction
- the demonstrations had become a serious concern to the government, since the source uses inflammatory language ('slander and attack the Party leaders'). By late April 1989, it was clear to the government that the demonstrations were not dispersing and in fact were gathering momentum. Deng and his colleagues – many of whom had suffered during the Cultural Revolution – now feared a second
- the government has taken the decision to crack down on the demonstrators ('illegal demonstrations or parades are prohibited'). No doubt this was intended to disperse the protests, but in fact, the publication of the source had the opposite effect. It caused great sympathy for the demonstrators among the people of Beijing, with over one million of them now taking to the streets to express support.

**Source C: in assessing the value of this source, students may refer to the following:**

**Provenance, tone and emphasis**

- students had been at the heart of organising the demonstrations since the death of Hu and student organisations, such as the Beijing Students Autonomous Federation, had been responsible for their expansion. Coming very much from the ‘men on the spot’, the source is highly valuable as evidence of the growing determination of the protesters to obtain change
- the source – and the action it describes – was timed to take advantage of the growing demonstrations at Tiananmen and of forthcoming events. The liberalising Soviet leader – Mikhail Gorbachev – was due to visit Beijing shortly after the source was produced and the hunger strikers clearly planned to exploit the expected media attention of the visit to promote their cause internationally
- the purpose of the source is to gain greater sympathy and participation in the protests centred around Tiananmen Square by ‘upping the ante’ and in the context of the posters, leaflets and other literature emerging as a result of the protests it would have been possible for it to be widely distributed in Beijing, and beyond
- the tone of the source is emphatic (‘history demands this of us’), valuable in showing how, with over a million people having taken part in the demonstrations by mid May 1989, the protesters felt China was at a critical turning point.

**Content and argument**

- the hunger strikers were moving the demonstrations to a new and more radical phase. Despite criticisms across state media, they had been encouraged by what were perceived to be a lack of specific state intervention and the actions of Politburo moderates such as Zhao Ziyang. In this, however, they were misguided. Within a week of the hunger strike beginning the government took the decision to implement martial law. The source has great value in demonstrating the escalation of both the protests, and the government’s response
- the demands of the protesters were widening to incorporate economic issues (‘inflation is sky-rocketing’), making the source valuable as further evidence that the protesters believed that the momentum of the demonstrations allowed them to make comprehensive demands of the government. The economic crisis of 1988 was one of the key reasons why many workers had joined with the students by May 1989 and the source represents this broadening of interests
- the hunger strikers were drawing attention to long-standing grievances in order to appeal to the broadest cross-section of Chinese society as possible. Cadre corruption was a long-standing issue as despite Party purges in the mid-1980s it remained rife and generated opposition to the CCP dictatorship among many Chinese people
- the hunger strikers were seeking to promote their cause as widely as possible (‘public opinion of the world, please support us!’). By May 1989, the international press had taken keen interest in the demonstrations and was due to flock to Beijing to cover Gorbachev’s visit and the escalation of the protesters’ activities and demands must be seen in this context.

**Section B**

**0 2** 'The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) had firm control over China by 1949.'

Assess the validity of this view.

**[25 marks]**

*Target: AO1*

*Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.*

**Generic Mark Scheme**

- L5:** Answers will display a very good understanding of the full demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively delivered. The supporting information will be well-selected, specific and precise. It will show a very good understanding of key features, issues and concepts. The answer will be fully analytical with a balanced argument and well-substantiated judgement. **21-25**
- L4:** Answers will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. It will be well-organised and effectively communicated. There will be a range of clear and specific supporting information showing a good understanding of key features and issues, together with some conceptual awareness. The answer will be analytical in style with a range of direct comment relating to the question. The answer will be well-balanced with some judgement, which may, however, be only partially substantiated. **16-20**
- L3:** Answers will show an understanding of the question and will supply a range of largely accurate information, which will show an awareness of some of the key issues and features, but may, however, be unspecific or lack precision of detail. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be a good deal of comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance, but a number of statements may be inadequately supported and generalist. **11-15**
- L2:** The answer is descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the question but a failure to grasp its full demands. There will be some attempt to convey material in an organised way, although communication skills may be limited. There will be some appropriate information showing understanding of some key features and/or issues, but the answer may be very limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some, but limited, comment in relation to the question and statements will, for the most part, be unsupported and generalist. **6-10**
- L1:** The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. **1-5**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**



**Indicative content**

**Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.**

**Arguments supporting the view that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) had firm control over China by 1949 might include:**

- the Communists were in firm control of China in 1949 because, for the first time in recent history, China had been unified by the Civil War. The GMD had been driven from the mainland and Mao was the unchallenged leader of the Communist Party. The CCP had the approval of China's other political parties as seen by the creation and support of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. CCP rule was more legitimate than that of the GMD, putting the Communists in firm control
- the CCP was popular with a range of social groups in China in 1949 and this support gave them firm control. For example, they had created strong links to the peasantry during the Civil War, when the actions of the People's Liberation Army had endeared them to the peasants. Many of the Chinese middle classes also felt connected to the CCP through their association with the 'national bourgeoisie' and the CCP's concept of democratic centralism. These levels of support placed the CCP in firm control of China by 1949
- the long-term resentment for the GMD that had accumulated by 1949 also placed the CCP in firm control of China, as many Chinese people welcomed the regime change the Civil War had brought. Long term economic problems caused by corruption, organised crime in cities and oppressive landlords in rural areas were all strongly associated with the GMD and this served to strengthen the CCP's control in 1949
- the Communists were also in firm control because they could claim to be restoring Chinese national pride and independence after many years of foreign domination and intervention. The GMD had been reliant on American support until 1948 and the USSR had continued to recognise Jiang's regime until 1949. The CCP had no such fetters.

**Arguments challenging the view that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) had firm control over China by 1949 might include:**

- although the bulk of GMD forces had been driven from the mainland, remnants of GMD control existed in the south and in local administration and Jiang had established a regime in Taiwan from which represented a threat and a focal point for opposition to the Communist regime. International recognition of Taiwan undermined Communist legitimacy in China, and so the CCP's control
- the influence of foreign powers also weakened the CCP's control in 1949. Opponents of the regime fled to British Hong Kong, and significant American interests remained in China itself. The question of relations with the USSR – and Soviet interests in Manchuria – almost undermined the CCP's strength
- there were deep-seated industrial and agricultural issues the CCP had to overcome in 1949. Years of war against Japan and the subsequent Civil War had damaged Chinese infrastructure and this, together with Soviet asset-stripping in Manchuria, meant that significant economic reconstruction was required. Agriculturally, Chinese food production in 1949 was significantly less than in 1937, with peasant expectations high. These issues hamstrung the new regime and weakened its position, and so its control

- although notionally in control of all of China in 1949, there were serious regional issues that CCP faced in 1949 which potentially weakened its control. As well as GMD-controlled Taiwan and areas of foreign influence, both Tibet and Xinjiang remained outside of Communist control and this weakened Mao's claim that the CCP now controlled all of China. Work to unify China and remove foreign influence remained.

Whilst the CCP faced significant challenges to overcome in 1949, they enjoyed a significant advantage that the GMD had not; they were popular with most of the Chinese people. This placed the Communists in far firmer control of China than its predecessors.

**0 3** 'Mao's motives for launching the Hundred Flowers Campaign in 1957 were to give Chinese intellectuals greater freedom to offer criticism.'

Assess the validity of this view.

**[25 marks]**

*Target: AO1*

*Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.*

### Generic Mark Scheme

- L5:** Answers will display a very good understanding of the full demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively delivered. The supporting information will be well-selected, specific and precise. It will show a very good understanding of key features, issues and concepts. The answer will be fully analytical with a balanced argument and well-substantiated judgement. **21-25**
- L4:** Answers will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. It will be well-organised and effectively communicated. There will be a range of clear and specific supporting information showing a good understanding of key features and issues, together with some conceptual awareness. The answer will be analytical in style with a range of direct comment relating to the question. The answer will be well-balanced with some judgement, which may, however, be only partially substantiated. **16-20**
- L3:** Answers will show an understanding of the question and will supply a range of largely accurate information, which will show an awareness of some of the key issues and features, but may, however, be unspecific or lack precision of detail. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be a good deal of comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance, but a number of statements may be inadequately supported and generalist. **11-15**
- L2:** The answer is descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the question but a failure to grasp its full demands. There will be some attempt to convey material in an organised way, although communication skills may be limited. There will be some appropriate information showing understanding of some key features and/or issues, but the answer may be very limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some, but limited, comment in relation to the question and statements will, for the most part, be unsupported and generalist. **6-10**
- L1:** The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. **1-5**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

**Indicative content**

**Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.**

**Arguments supporting the view that Mao's motives for launching the Hundred Flowers Campaign in 1957 were to give Chinese intellectuals greater freedom to offer criticism might include:**

- when the Chinese Communist Party assumed power in China their initial policies were lenient towards intellectuals; many welcomed into the 'national bourgeoisie' and were integrated into the system of 'democratic centralism'. The great freedom to criticise offered by the campaign fitted well with the longer pattern of working with China's intellectuals, suggesting this was a genuine aim
- Mao needed intellectual support for the CCP's economic policies, including collectivisation and the growing industrialisation of China, especially in the context of the emerging Sino-Soviet Split which threatened the position of Soviet advisers in China. The campaign from this perspective was a genuine attempt to obtain the participation of intellectuals and their required expertise, rather than an attempt to expose and purge them
- the Hungarian Uprising of 1956 had worried Mao, who believed it had come about because the Hungarian party leaders had become too distant from the masses and the intellectuals. The campaign can be seen as Mao's attempts to make the Communist regime in China more relevant to intellectuals and so reduce the prospect of a similar event taking place in China
- ideologically, Mao did believe that the Party needed to learn from the people, and of the importance of mass participation. He had also been concerned by the actions of senior Party colleagues, such as Gao Gang, in recent years. Allowing greater intellectual freedoms to criticise would fit the notion of Mao looking beyond the Party to the people and so his motives appear genuine.

**Arguments challenging the view that Mao's motives for launching the Hundred Flowers Campaign in 1957 were to give Chinese intellectuals greater freedom to offer criticism might include:**

- Mao had a long-term track record of suppressing alternative views. This dated all the way back to Yan'an Rectification campaign and manifested in the earlier 1950s with campaigns like Thought Reform and the Three- and Five-Antis. Indeed, a rectification campaign was ongoing at the time the Hundred Flowers Campaign was launched. It seems likely that in 1957 Mao was trying to locate criticism in order to eliminate it
- Mao himself was deeply sensitive to personal criticism, as seen by his response to the actions of Gao Gang and Rao Shushi in 1954 and the Party purge which followed. It seems highly unlikely that he would launch a campaign inviting criticism of his regime
- only two years before the Hundred Flowers Campaign, the Chinese intellectual Hu Feng had been imprisoned as a counter-revolutionary for criticising Mao's views of art and ideology. The recent memory of Hu's fate meant that intellectual criticism of Mao was slow to emerge when the Hundred Flowers Campaign was initially launched, and suggests that Mao's motives were not to permit greater criticism of the regime
- the aftermath of the Hundred Flowers Campaign also suggests that Mao's motives were not genuine. The criticism that began to emerge in April 1957 was swiftly followed by the lengthy Anti-Rightist Campaign that led to hundreds of thousands of intellectuals being humiliated and imprisoned in labour camps. The immediate state reaction to the criticism and the length of the Anti-Rightist Campaign suggested that the Hundred Flowers Campaign was simply a pretext to crack down on intellectual opposition.

A case can be made that Mao's motives were genuine and that intellectuals misinterpreted the type of criticism that Mao was expecting them to offer. Instead of criticising scientific theories, they criticised China's political system and this was unacceptable to Mao. It could also be argued that Mao's initial motives were genuine and it was only after the surprising level of criticism that was received that he decided to act against it. Any valid judgment is acceptable according to the evidence deployed.

- 0 4** To what extent did Communist China's international position become stronger in the years 1966 to 1976?

**[25 marks]**

*Target: AO1*

*Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.*

### Generic Mark Scheme

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- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

**Indicative content**

**Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.**

**Arguments supporting the view that Communist China's international position became stronger in the years 1966 to 1976 might include:**

- China's influence over much of the developing world continued to increase in this period. Through a combination of subversion and diplomacy, Chinese influence in Africa had become highly significant by the 1970s; a third of all Chinese embassies were in that continent. The years 1966 to 1976 saw China build on the groundwork it had previously established and project itself as a friend of developing nations and as their 'natural leader'
- key to China's diplomatic isolation had been its lack of international recognition and during this period the issue was largely solved by the United Nations replacing Taiwan's seat with that of China's, at the behest of several African nations. The USA's lack of opposition to this key diplomatic shift increased China's international prestige
- China was more frequently able to 'check' the role of the USSR and the leading Communist nation in this period, demonstrating its growing strength in international affairs. Mao was deeply critical of the USSR's suppression of the Prague Spring in 1968, for example, and Brezhnev was unable to secure universal condemnation of China at the Moscow Conference the following year. China had emerged as a clear alternative leader in the Communist world
- China's international position and prestige on the world stage was further enhanced by the Sino-American détente of the early 1970s, which saw President Nixon visit China, trade improve between the two nations, and the eventual establishment of diplomatic relations. American willingness to trade with China demonstrated China's growing importance as a nuclear superpower in its own right on the world stage.

**Arguments challenging the view that Communist China's international position became stronger in the years 1966 to 1976 might include:**

- China's international reputation was severely damaged during the 'active' stage of the Cultural Revolution through a series of high-profile attacks on foreign embassies and diplomats, and rash agitation abroad in countries like Indonesia. This led to China being seen as internationally disruptive by a number of nations – with Chinese diplomats being expelled – and did not improve its position abroad
- despite significant Chinese pressure on Britain during this period – attacking British interests in China, staging a confrontation in London and sponsoring terrorism in Hong Kong – China was unable to force Britain into granting early concessions in relation to Hong Kong itself. This demonstrated that Chinese abilities to achieve stated international goals was limited
- although more able to challenge the USSR in this period, the poor relations with the Soviet Union threatened China since it led to a build-up of superior Soviet forces along China's northern borders and even the threat of full-scale war in 1969. The USSR remained the most influential Communism nation, for example in Vietnam where Chinese influence in the conflict was limited
- although superficially improving, relations between the USA and China were limited and did not outlast Nixon's presidency. It took many more years for diplomatic relations to be established between the two, and the breakthrough China had hoped for in relation to Taiwan did not materialise.

Although the early part of this period seemed to set back Communist China's international position, by the end of the period its position in foreign affairs had much improved, with its seat on the United Nations being a major turning point. This can be explained by China's emergence as a superpower in its own right, which allowed it to challenge the USSR and improve its relationship with the United States.